

The Montana Governor's Drought Advisory Committee recently identified five categories of issues and ideas to guide its future work collected from two facilitated sessions:

A – Action Plan

B – Policy

C – Education

D – Committee

E – Communication

Will you please select 4 items, in order of priority, from each of the above five categories for prioritization to assist us in developing the future work plan for the Drought Advisory Committee?

Please try to have your prioritized choices by category back to me at jaber@mt.gov by Friday November 13. Thanks, Jess Aber, Staff Drought Advisory Committee /DNRC Water Resources.

A – Action Plan

- 0 The Committee should identify areas of the state where impacts are anticipated to warn potentially-affected parties.
- 1 The Committee should take measures to ensure that its information can be easily understood by our constituents (user-friendly).
- 2 The Committee should work to foster better relationships with county commissions, FSA committees, and local drought committees
- 3 Can we provide decision support in the form of risk assessment for affected sectors and by specific geographic regions of the state?
- 4 The Committee should add education about the effects of evapotranspiration on soil moisture to the public to its education objectives.
- 5 A drought status map and / or graph product could appear on television and in newspapers of the state on the weather page summarizing drought conditions.
- 6 Meet to review the upcoming year's work plan in preparation for the Congressional letter to go out in February.
- 7 The Committee needs to communicate its needs and concerns early to the Congressional delegation of the state, as in February or March.
- 8 Provide direction to USGS and delegation about where the Committee and its members would like to see climate sensitive streamflow gauging and other monitoring such as soil moisture, and groundwater.
- 9 Improve ways to collect data that reveals better ways to cope with climate variability

B – Policy

- 10 Are the member agencies making their needs known to the Committee, Governor, and Congressional Delegation? Ex. USGS gauging that reflects non-anthropogenic or natural conditions.
- 11 Work to sustain and expand the real-time monitoring of mountain snowpack, soil moisture, reservoir storage, and streamflow to allow for better planning and guidance
- 12 Support the National Drought Policy Act and the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS).
- 13 The committee should learn more about forest management practices that can improve water supply, provide economic returns on dying trees from insects or slight fire damage to reduce fuel loads that make wildfire more severe and expansive.
- 14 Have regional drought meetings in severely impacted areas.
- 15 Do more in the way of demand reduction of water in all sectors.
- 16 Promote changes to municipal water supply systems to better conserve water.
- 17 Promote awareness of drought impact funding and identify opportunities to bundle funding sources.

C – Education

- 18 Conservation education should be a priority, focusing on domestic consumption.
- 19 Educating the public about groundwater partnering with GWIC is important.
- 20 The Committee ought to partner with the State Office of Climatology more to educate the public about climatology and climate change trends.
- 21 The Committee should add education about the effects of evapotranspiration on soil moisture to the public to its education objectives.
- 22 The committee should learn more about forest management practices that can improve water supply, provide economic returns on dying trees from insects or slight fire damage to reduce fuel loads that make wildfire more severe and expansive.
- 23 Work to sustain and expand the real-time monitoring of mountain snowpack, soil moisture, reservoir storage, and streamflow to allow for better planning and guidance.
- 24 The Committee should network with the state Office of Public Education on reaching out to youth about climate, drought, and conservation.
- 25 Educating the rural residential and development, realty sectors about the implications of fire for homeowners residing in the forest interface is important.

- 26 Could we do more to promote awareness and use of more efficient irrigation methods? Ex. Equipment audits, scheduling programs, drip irrigation conversion
- 27 The Committee should issue its own news releases following meetings, especially if the media was not present at the meeting.
- 28 Promote and learn more about adaptive management strategies for water use in light of expected climate change.
- 29 Improve ways to collect data that reveals better ways to cope with climate variability
- 30 Learn more about the relationship of forest fires and mountain precipitation especially snowpack.

D - Committee

- 31 Are we getting information needed by county commissions?
- 32 Continue to foster and improve the relationship with county extension agents.
- 33 Improve the relationship between the Committee and University water centers, Montana Watercourse, and schools.
- 34 Partner better with the Congressional delegation representatives on the Committee to better deliver assistance and information to our constituents.
- 35 Find alternatives to having Committee reporters travel to Helena for all meetings regardless of conditions, such Montana Net, Go To Meetings, state networks.
- 36 Find ways to improve attendance at meetings of drought-affected groups.
- 37 Improve the representation of municipal water suppliers at the meetings.
- 38 Have selected subject areas for discussion at Committee meetings as a regular agenda item in addition to special guest speakers and appearances.

E - Communication

- 39 Is the information provided by our committee partners being disseminated widely?
- 40 Promote and learn more about adaptive management strategies for water use in light of expected climate change.
- 41 Information should be shared across political lines.
- 42 The Committee needs to communicate its needs and concerns early to the Congressional delegation of the state, as in February or March.
- 43 Could we reach out to specific potentially-affected sectors with guidance or warnings, such as dryland farming, guides / outfitters?

- 44 More use should be made of radio information dissemination as farmers and ranchers are avid listeners.
- 45 The Committee should issue its own news releases following meetings, especially if the media was not present at the meeting.
- 46 Have selected subject areas for discussion at Committee meetings as a regular agenda item in addition to special guest speakers and appearances.
- 47 Assist in dissemination of Trout Unlimited Water Rights for New Landowners' booklet.
- 48 Engage the public with Committee in virtual meetings without attending.
- 49 Promote awareness of drought impact funding and identify opportunities to bundle funding sources.
- 50 Re-engage the Montana League of Cities and Towns in awareness of drought.